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FOR NEA, S/I, AND PRM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/04/2018

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SUBJECT: JORDAN TO HOST NEIGHBORS REFUGEE WORKING GROUP
MARCH 17 OR 18

REF: 07 AMMAN 3208

Classified By: CDA Daniel Rubinstein for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Director of the Foreign Minister's Private Office Jamal Al-Shamayleh informed Polcouns on March 3 that Jordan will host the next Iraq neighbors' working group on refugee issues either March 17 or 18. MFA staff subsequently confirmed that they are planning to host delegations from Iraq, its neighbors, P5 members, Egypt, Bahrain, and international organizations to discuss the needs of displaced Iraqis and the countries hosting them. MFA representatives said they expected health and education to figure prominently on the agenda, and that they would begin distributing invitations within the next week. The MFA's Iraq desk officer explained that the GOJ had delayed fixing a date for the meeting until Jordan's new visa regime for Iraqis was ready for implementation; he expected the MOI would publicly announce the regime later today (March 4). While FM Bashir may open the conference, they expect attendees to be at the "working level" - generally at the rank of Deputy Foreign Minister/Secretary-General.

¶2. (C) MFA colleagues welcomed USG input in preparation of the agenda and participation in the upcoming working group. Recalling the minimal progress and largely negative atmosphere of the July 2007 meeting (reftel), Post would welcome Department guidance on USG objectives for the upcoming working group and suggestions on corresponding agenda items that Post can feed into the MFA's preparations as soon as possible.
RUBINSTEIN